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Textspeak Speaking

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“Textspeak Speaking”

Linguists have long debated over what classifies a language and what classifies a dialect. Thankfully, it seems, a sort of conclusion has been reached. If two languages are “mutually intelligible,” meaning those who speak one form can understand the other, they are likely dialects of a common language.¹ This, doesn’t cover all there is to say—all forms of communication make up a complicated world—but it offers a good starting place.

One can also take this line of thinking and apply it to the forms of communication used inside of a language. For example, think of how similar the language of a speech and the language of a conversation are. Think of how different they are as well. These situations require different responses. These are known as registers or situational dialects.

The same thinking is relevant to the different forms of written communication. There is formal writing, such as this, and informal writing, which may never see the close eye of many readers. The two could easily be classified as registers, but for the sake of argument it is useful to think of them as dialects instead. A writer in formal English can often understand informal written English—or textspeak—and a textspeak writer can understand a formal writer, and thus they are mutually intelligible.

The subject is further complicated as the written inherently implies some level of forethought or control that the spoken does not always require. Writing, whether formal or informal, is a skill, learned and taught the same way one learns to ride a bicycle. As they grow, humans naturally acquire spoken language and the ability to use it. Writing doesn’t work the same way. Therefore, a writer must consciously apply their learned skill in one way or another.

are u done?
can i talk now?

Have you been trying to come up with what to say next this whole time? Please don’t interrupt.

¹ Marc Ettlinger, "What's the Difference Between a Dialect and a Language?" Slate Magazine, February 3, 2014, http://www.slate.com/blogs/quora/2014/02/03/what_s_the_difference_between_a_dialect_and_a_language.html.

*wtf i didnt interrupt
this is a CONVERSATION
so plz chill*

I hadn't finished my thought. Let me say everything I have to say before you respond.

*we'll be here forever if we wait that long...
its like u dont kno how to share lol 😞*

Excuse me?

*A N Y W A Y
basically what all of this means is that textspeakers can understand normal english and formal writers SHOULD be able to understand textspeak (sometimes they just... dont tho)
and b/c of that they arent like different languages
theyre different forms of the same thing
u talk differently when you talk to your boss vs ur friends*

Yes, that's what I was saying. Will you allow me to go on?

*no lol
ive got more to say
#immediacy*



*as long
as
i
keep talking
like this*

Say what you wanted to say. I will wait if I must.

*okay cool thnx so
languages are rlly complicated and like
dialects and languages are kind of the same thing? sometimes?
b/c in china they speak "dialects" but no one can understand each other
but in like norway and sweden they have "languages" that r almost the same.
its weird*

whoever had the better military got to pick the language pretty much ²

I believe the quote you want is, "A language is a dialect with an army and a navy," as said by linguist Max Weinreich.³

sure i guess

that sounds right

*its just weird that the people in charge got to decide a whole language for everybody.
and then in schools everybody learns that language so that they all speak the same and
write the same and think the same or at least they do in front of ""the man"" so they
dont get in trouble*

(mayb im makin this up idk)

but wait

wait

jfc

the formal english ppl r in charge

r u gonna start coming after me w/guns and shit now?? to stay in charge???

b/c that's not ok



No, of course not. Especially not if you make an effort to help me understand you. You use so many new words and abbreviations that it's hard to know what you mean sometimes.

!!

let me live abbreviations have a lot of history

people abbreviated things in old manuscripts b/c it saved time/ink/effort

those old books were big my dude

gotta save time n space somewhere (#gogreen)

it wasn't just normal books too like they abbreviated in the bible ⁴...THE BIBLE



² John McWhorter, "What's a Language, Anyway?" *The Atlantic*, January 19, 2016, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/01/difference-between-language-dialect/424704/>. McWhorter explains that, "Mandarin and Cantonese, for example, are more different than Spanish and Italian," and yet his Swedish friend can speak to someone from Norway in his native language with ease.

³ McWhorter, "What's a Language Anyway?". Ettlinger, "What's the Difference?". Both McWhorter and Ettlinger quote Weinreich in their exploration of dialects. Ettlinger offers a shorter summary definition while McWhorter looks at the question from more angles and uses more examples.

⁴ Cameron Hunt McNabb, "The Truth about Internet Slang: It Goes Way Back," *Salon*, August 3, 2014, http://www.salon.com/2014/08/03/the_truth_about_internet_slang_it_goes_way_back/.

I suppose language hasn't changed as much as we might think, but it can't be denied that change is the norm. Esteemed linguist Walt Wolfram wrote, "The only language not in a perpetual state of flux is a dead language."⁵ If languages didn't change perhaps we would still be using the pictograms of the first written communication, which were hardly translatable across cultures. It has taken change to make the written word more universal.

Perhaps, though, the change is moving too quickly now. With the rate of evolution of textspeak is it possible that its users are losing their sense of the rules? What sort of risk does this over-evolution pose?

*ok that thing about textspeak ruining english or whatever is #fake
so dont attack me for it.*

*ppl hav literally ALWAYS been complaining about language change.⁶
throwin a fit over it now doesn't mean anything and it especially doesnt make me want
to listen to u. like at all.*

I was getting to that. I believe you, trust me. Multiple linguists have concluded that textspeak is not affecting its user's ability to write.⁷ A few, like linguistics professor David Crystal, assert that textspeak actually requires more skill and understanding of how language works. Crystal says, "Before you can write and play with abbreviated forms, you need to have a sense of how the sounds of your language relate to the letters."⁸ As the poet needs to understand grammar rules before they can break them, so the textspeaker needs to know their language before they can break it.

*ive been TRYING to tell you that its on purpose
sometimes its cause the medium needs us to write less (@twitter) but really that doesn't
happen anymore*



⁵ Walt Wolfram, "The Truth About Change," PBS.org 2005, <http://www.pbs.org/speak/ahead/change/change/>. Wolfram's essay is part of an online collection of essays and articles on language change under the title "Do You Speak American?" as gathered by PBS.

⁶ John McWhorter, "Txtng Is Killing Language. JK!!!" (lecture, TED2013, February 2013), https://www.ted.com/talks/john_mcwhorter_txtng_is_killing_language_jk. McWhorter, an enthusiastic linguist, features a list of these complaints in his talk. Around minute 9:45 he presents complaints written as far back as 1841, and an extraordinary example from 63 A.D. from a man complaining about the current trend in Latin. That trend would later become French.

⁷ S.A. Tagliamonte, and D. Denis, "Linguistic Ruin? Lol! Instant Messaging And Teen Language," *American Speech* 83, no. 1 (2008): 3-34. doi:10.1215/00031283-2008-001. Tagliamonte's work is a perfect example of this well established belief among linguists. See the other work of John McWhorter, David Crystal, and Derek Denis for more examples.

⁸ David Crystal, "2b or Not 2b?" *The Guardian*, July 4, 2008, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/jul/05/saturdayreviewsfeatres.guardianreview>.

*b/c like when i have to write formal i will, i get theres different contexts for things.
theres a right place and a wrong place for everything*

As you said, one doesn't sound the same when they talk to their boss compared to when they talk to their friends. Presidents don't talk to their families the same way they address the country.

Imfao

i hope not



imagine being the first spouse and having the president try to talk to you like that:



"Dearest, we are currently facing quite a difficult time, one fraught with a supreme lack of unity between me and my lunch. It is now more important than ever that we come together to solve this crisis, ideally with a grilled cheese sandwich."

i kno they have cooks or w/e but... makes ya think

As you say, people tend not to speak the way they write. Linguist John McWhorter touches on this, saying, "In a distant era now, it was common when one gave a speech to basically talk like writing," referring to the very formal speeches given in the past. He also introduces a very important phrase: "fingered speech."⁹ This is a new way to classify textspeak rather than calling it proper writing. It is writing as if people were talking to one another.

*that shit took like 2 hours to listen to
not the talk but the old time-y speeches*

...

like the one before the gettysburg address took THAT LONG¹⁰

T W O H O U R S

we dont do that anymore

we've got places to BE



I though textspeak wasn't meant to save time these days. You said yourself that textspeak is used occasionally, "cause the medium needs us to write less...but really that doesn't happen anymore." Even if it takes less time to write out abbreviations, isn't some of that time lost along the way? John Humphrys wrote, "If the recipient of the message has to spend ten minutes trying to translate it, those precious minutes are

⁹ McWhorter, "Txtng," 3:00.

¹⁰ Ibid., 5:30.

being wasted.”¹¹ Will you really get where you want to be faster after those wasted minutes?

so maybe it DOESNT take less time

but so what? it doesnt take longer than formal writing 😞😞

...

have u ever thought about how long it takes to find an emoji?

its a long time

l o n g

*and like, memes? (lol 🤔)*¹²

unless u have that saved its just going to be a waste

Then what are you really doing? What is the purpose of textspeak? It doesn't save time and its tradition in manuscripts is built on that. It is okay to admit you're wrong, sometimes. I've been trying to.

fine.....

all of that is true

please be careful how you say it tho

*a lot of the time people say that *im* exactly like textspeak*

*they say its a lazy language so i must be lazy*¹³

you already told me that isnt true. everyone knows textspeak isnt a shortcut and it isnt lazy and it doesn't make you dumb



...

would it be fair of me to say that formal writers are stuffy?

or old fashioned?

or boring?

¹¹ John Humphrys, "I H8 Txt Msgs: How Texting Is Wrecking Our Language," *Daily Mail*, September 24, 2007, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-483511/I-h8-txt-msgs-How-texting-wrecking-language.html>. Humphrys argues mostly in the name of tradition throughout his article, but in places his arguments are sound, as is the case here.

¹² Harley Grant, "Tumblinguistics: Innovation and Variation in New Forms of Written CMC" (Diss., University of Glasgow. Academia.edu. Accessed November 15, 2016. https://www.academia.edu/18612487/Tumblinguistics_innovation_and_variation_in_new_forms_of_written_CMC#_=_, 28-29.)

This is mostly from measured personal experience, but Tumblinguistics also explains this in terms of the image response.

¹³ Ksenija Bogetić, "Metalinguistic comments in teenage personal blogs: Bringing youth voices to studies of youth, language and technology," *Text & Talk* 36, no. 3 (May 2016): 249-50, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost. Bogetić explains this phenomena called iconization: "a semiotic process whereby characteristics of a language are seen as an iconic reflection of essential characteristics of its users."



Forgetting to see one another as communicators making conscious choices is part of the problem, so no. If you are making a choice, why choose it? Especially considering how divisive the choice has become.

*its like you said
textspeak is “fingered speech.””
i do it so i can *sound* more like myself or as close as it can b with writing
when i use an emoji u can SEE what i mean
as well as hear it/read it/whatever
(this is kind of confusing because u can only sorta read textspeak out loud even if it
SOUNDS like speaking in ur head. BRAINS ARE AMAZING)
and stuff LIKE T H I S shows how i would say the words out loud
paralanguage¹⁴
and!!! different spellings can mean different things like
YAAAASSSSSS 🌟🌟
is different from
yeah.^{15 16}
...
can u see the difference?
can YOU see the difference?
(that’s got rules too but its weird and confusing and also fluid?? i use both u and you in
sentences, idk dude)¹⁷*

So it’s about better showing your personality and adding flare to your words?

no no no dude

¹⁴ “Can You Speak Emoji?” YouTube Video, 12:39, Posted by “PBSIdeaChannel,” April 13, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRNVf-1M7xQ>. Technically paralanguage is a part of spoken communication—nonverbal things such as gesture and tone—but as textspeak is “fingered speech” it can be applied as “textual paralanguage.” My first introduction to the concept of textual paralanguage was “Can You Speak Emoji?”.

¹⁵ Megan Garber, “How to Say ‘Yes’ (by Not Saying ‘Yes’),” *The Atlantic*, April 10, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2015/04/how-to-say-yes-by-not-saying-yes/390129/>.

¹⁶ Leonora Epstein, “The 21 Ways People Say “Yes” When Typing, Defined,” *BuzzFeed*, February 12, 2014, https://www.buzzfeed.com/leonoraepstein/the-21-ways-people-say-yes-when-typing-defined?utm_term=.bcnAx5pOz#.lrq17M08v. This is a humorous examination of the concept of “yes” affirmatives and word choice, but it also proves that even the least academic writer is aware of their word choice.

¹⁷ Gretchen McCulloch, “What’s the Difference Between “You” and “U”?” *MentalFloss*, May 7, 2015, <http://mentalfloss.com/article/63598/whats-difference-between-you-and-u>.

its that and also feelings
dont u FEEL the joy in YAAAASSSSS ✨️✨️ ?
and if id said
yes.
wouldnt u feel different?
punctuation/capitalization/EVERYTHING matters
its more paralanguage n stuff
everything got all stern. serious. all of a sudden.
a period says "i don't want to talk about this anymore" (and other stuff tbh)¹⁸

Suppose I didn't see all the differences that you're talking about?

then you arent the same as me.
you dont rllly kno my dialect like i have to kno urs
╰(╯╰╯╯╰
...
that sounds mean
its just. textspeakers expect this sort of thing
and it comes with the community/medium we're a part of/using^{19 20}
sounding super formal in a text is weird AF
...
the whole point of communicating is to bring us together.
make us understood.
y would i confuse/alienate/isolate my audience that way²¹
???

Regardless I worry that there is exclusion in your choice. If you choose to write the formal way, it will be easier for everyone to understand you.

¹⁸ Ben Crair, "The Period Is Pissed," *New Republic*, November 23, 2013, <https://newrepublic.com/article/115726/period-our-simplest-punctuation-mark-has-become-sign-anger>.

¹⁹ Grant, Chp 2.3-2.4. Grant discusses the way community affects what topics are discussed in a medium and how a user might adapt their own language to match the overall tone of the medium and the community.

²⁰ Bogetić, p 261-62. Bogetić examines how one textspeak user defines his choice as a way of identifying with the rap community. Additionally, this user suggests that, "on here," (meaning on the internet and in textspeak mediums) grammar rules are different, and so users should expect more informal forms.

²¹ Jen Doll, "Why Drag It Out?" *The Atlantic*, March 2013, March 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/03/dragging-it-out/309220/>. While not strictly an article on the concept of alienating the recipient of messages, Doll ends her article with an observation after an activity proposed by Tagliamonte. Not using elongations (adding extra letters to words) in texting often gets a "What's wrong?" response as the tone has suddenly become formal.

what if i dont want everyone to understand?

Why wouldn't you want everyone to understand you?

idk

i guess

...

*im not trying to talk to everybody
that isnt what this is FOR, y'know?*

*when im using textspeak im probably talking to one other person mayb like 4 max
and they already know ME*



hey.

*we're supposed to be like, related or something.
u understand me right?*

I just worry that you don't understand how to communicate effectively now. I want you to be able to say what you want to, but I want you to do it in the best way.

i mean



I can still do this, with the long sentences, and the correct grammar and spelling. I can go on, and I can sound smart and be understood. You know that.

but u know what i mean like this too

y force myself to do that when i dont have to?

i dont sound like myself when i do that.

i sound like you. ^{22 23}

*and this way u know how i *feel* which means more to me
we feel closer, not like we're writing across time or distance or on the internet but in the same place
talking.
together.*

there isnt rilly a BEST way

²² Bogetic, p 261-62. Users recognize the way they are writing, and suggest that it is simply a part of who they are. Elsewhere in the study it is shown textspeakers may choose formal written language as a way of presenting a more intelligent self.

²³ "Can You Speak Emoji?" 2:00. Textspeak is a way of presenting one's identity not just in the context of community but on one's own. Emojis can also be used to represent oneself in conversation (by means of skin color, gender, or other identifier).

just the way that we pick for where we are and what we're doing

...

y do u even bother sticking to formal if its just convention?

dont you want to relax sometimes?

do u just like being ""better"" than me?

No, that's not the point. I just believe formal language is more universal. As we've established, someone who writes in textspeak can understand formal English, and formal English is more easily translated into other languages. This way more people can access my work. I also think I can argue more effectively and better represent my sources. That allows me to be more inclusive in my conversations. My readers can find the material I've read without having to seek me out and ask for a list. I've already given it to them.

Formal writing will likely be around much longer than textspeak forms. Slang comes and goes incredibly fast.²⁴ Even if some slang words remain and are adopted, the sticking power of formal English lends me credibility. Credibility is essential to my ability to persuade a reader to listen to me. You already have a captive audience ready and willing to hear you out. The formality of my words might make me "sound smarter," but it is also a sign of the additional work that I had to put into them

I don't think you really want me to argue this, though. You know what formal writing is for because you know how to use it, just as I know how to use textspeak. Both of us simply choose not to write in one or the other.

fair

i guess



lets just agree that there ARE different places to use one or the other and we've got reasons to write like we do

i wont ask u to write your smart papers like this

just dont ask me to talk to my friends like its a research study

this is cheesy AF Jesus

sorry

So long as you don't start calling me stuffy or old fashioned. Demonizing either side isn't going to get anything done.

tru

so i guess this is... over?

²⁴ Adrienne Lafrance, "Teens Aren't Ruining Language," *The Atlantic*, January 27, 2016, <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2016/01/blatantly-budge-and-other-dead-slang/431433/>. This is a fairly well known phenomena, but Lafrance offers an article that contains a good series of examples on the subject with focus on the modern and how technology has affected the process.

Maybe for the two of us talking this time but I'm sure that you'll come up with all sorts of new forms for people to be upset about in the years to come. Then we'll be meeting again.

*i plan on it
for sure can't wait*

Imao 😂😂

communicating is more fun that way

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McWhorter, John. "Txtng Is Killing Language. JK!!!" Lecture. TED2013. February 2013. https://www.ted.com/talks/john_mcwhorter_txtng_is_killing_language_jk.

____. "What's a Language, Anyway?" *The Atlantic*. January 19, 2016. <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/01/difference-between-language-dialect/424704/>.

Tagliamonte, S. A., and D. Denis. "Linguistic Ruin? Lol! Instant Messaging And Teen Language." *American Speech* 83, no. 1 (2008): 3-34. doi:10.1215/00031283-2008-001.

Wolfram, Walt. "The Truth About Change." PBS.org 2005. <http://www.pbs.org/speak/ahead/change/change/>.

Textspeak Speaking
Annotated Bibliography

Bogetić, Ksenija. "Metalinguistic comments in teenage personal blogs: Bringing youth voices to studies of youth, language and technology." *Text & Talk* 36, no. 3 (May 2016): 245-268. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost.

Bogetić, a linguist by training, analyzes data from 32 blogs written by teenagers. Her aim is to see how young people themselves analyze written language, separating the analysis from an adult perspective. The voice most often heard in the textspeak debate is that of the appalled adult, and so her work is much appreciated. Bogetić also pays close attention to linguistic ideology and beliefs that sprout because of language. Her work shows that even teenagers themselves harbor the negative beliefs surrounding textspeak. The academic article proves extremely useful as it defines the many reasons behind the use of textspeak in the user's own words. It also shows, quite clearly, that many textspeakers use their language in a conscious way depending on their environment, a central part of my piece. The language skills of textspeak users are not being degraded by their use, but rather sharpened, as they actively analyze and participate in a growing and changing language.

"Can You Speak Emoji?" YouTube Video. 12:39. Posted by "PBSIdeaChannel." April 13, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRNVf-1M7xQ>.

The Idea Channel puts forth numerous complex "ideas" in each of its videos with an aim at creating discussion and curiosity in their viewers. While not properly academic, and mostly aimed at entertainment, this video on the concept of speaking emoji spans a broad field and brings together many topics to stimulate interest in the topic and is well supported by numerous sources. The piece covers a large portion of the history of emoji and textspeak as well and introduces the topic of paralinguistic aspects to text, which also serves as a central portion of my argument. The video should not be taken on its own, as it is not a fully academic source, but the topics it presents are great conversation starters, and the writers have put together numerous ideas that may seem disparate in an easy to understand way. If one only needed a crash course in textspeak this video would be a useful place to look.

Crair, Ben. "The Period Is Pissed." *New Republic*. November 23, 2013. <https://newrepublic.com/article/115726/period-our-simplest-punctuation-mark-has-become-sign-anger>.

While Crair is not a linguist himself, his observations about the changing use of simple punctuation are insightful. Using mostly anecdotal evidence, Crair explores the transformation in punctuation throughout his own life. The experts and data he sought out support his personal observations. Crair also reinforces the idea that language is shifting back towards being a representation of the spoken word. His article serves as a useful direction to which to point people interested in the specifics of punctuation change while also standing on its own as a representation of that change. Including it allowed me to quickly reference the concept without going too in depth into an explanation my textspeaking voice would not have time to delve into.

Crystal, David. "2b or Not 2b?" *The Guardian*. July 4, 2008. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/jul/05/saturdayreviewsfeatres.guardianreview>.

Linguist David Crystal directly confronts those who decry textspeak. He presents numerous examples, including the compelling facts about textspeak's positive impact on language as to why English is not approaching a doom and gloom end. Crystal even goes on to explain how many of the changes utilized in textspeak have been used in short form writing since time gone by, and therefore should not be unfamiliar to linguistic critics. His response was actually what lead me to Humphrys in the first place and having both sides of that perspective was useful. Crystal's article does lean heavily into the realm of an opinion piece, but his opinion is certainly more warranted than others as a linguistics professor who has been watching language change for his career. The article also offered numerous jumping off points for my own research which allowed me to expand into new sources and learn more on the topic.

Doll, Jen. "Why Drag It Out?" *The Atlantic*. March 2013. March 2013. <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/03/dragging-it-out/309220/>.

Doll's article examines the phenomena of elongation in textspeak. Adding extra letters is an important part of conveying tone, she found through her own personal anecdotes, and through the words of experts. Her article was not strictly academic, but it does serve as an example of some of the techniques used in textspeak, and she features one of the linguists, Tagliamonte, whose work I later looked at. The most compelling portion of her article was the discussion near the end of what happens when these two tones—the formal and the informal—brush up against one another. It was important for me to include examples of numerous different textspeak forms, and also to work towards the sensation of friction Doll presents us with. The example she presents from Tagliamonte served as a powerful anecdote which reminded me of something I had also experienced. People can tell when something is wrong while communicating over textspeak for the same reasons we can when speaking out loud. We sound differently.

Epstein, Leonora. "The 21 Ways People Say "Yes" When Typing, Defined." *BuzzFeed*. February 12, 2014. https://www.buzzfeed.com/leonoraepstein/the-21-ways-people-say-yes-when-typing-defined?utm_term=.bcnAx5pOz#.lrq17M08v.

This listicle contains 21 separate examples of the ways a slight change in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling can change the meaning of the simple word "yes". While not academic by any means, the piece serves as an example of further metalinguistic analysis by someone who is presumably a textspeak user. The writer had to sit down and think on every possible iteration of "yes" they could consider. These "yes" forms are not used willy-nilly and the fact that they are able to be analyzed at all represents that fact. The listicle served as another point of contemplation in the writing of my piece and serves as another more humorous direction I can point towards. It combines the personal experience of Crair's article with the metalinguistic eye of Bogetić within a very short span. It also ties closely into and further enhances Garber's article by providing examples of the phenomena she describes.

Ettlinger, Marc. "What's the Difference Between a Dialect and a Language?" Slate Magazine. Feb 2014. <https://slate.com/human-interest/2014/02/what-s-the-difference-between-a-dialect-and-a-language.html>.

Ettlinger's concise answer to the question "what is the difference between a dialect and a language" helped me in my initial research. I wasn't sure if textspeak was a whole new language developing in a digital space or some other thing I had not thought of. Seeking out an expert's opinion, was useful. Ettlinger explains that from a linguistic perspective the greatest difference between a language and a dialect is whether or not they are mutually intelligible, or able to be understood. If a speaker of one can understand and respond to the other they are likely dialects and not new languages. Having this simply laid out allowed me to look into further the question, find more sources with longer more complex answers, and further define what, exactly, textspeak is in relation to formal written English.

Garber, Megan. "How to Say 'Yes' (by Not Saying 'Yes')." *The Atlantic*. April 10, 2015. <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2015/04/how-to-say-yes-by-not-saying-yes/390129/>.

Garber, a culture writer, traces the history and trajectory of many of the various new forms of "yes" that can be found not only in written communication but in a few forms of spoken communication as well. She discusses how the internet and textspeak have allowed language to become more playful and relaxed—informal. This allows one to express a broader range of emotions, and a greater level of enthusiasm, in their textual responses. Well researched through other cultural articles, her piece also offers an excellent jumping off point into the sea of changing linguistic culture. A number of my other sources were linked in this piece, and the way it presented its case with its own playful use of language was a fine example to me when writing my own piece. Garber's article could be the more professional version of Epstein's, even as it put down ideas the listicle couldn't capture.

Grant, Harley. "Tumblinguistics: Innovation and Variation in New Forms of Written CMC." diss. University of Glasgow. Academia.edu. Accessed November 15, 2016. https://www.academia.edu/18612487/Tumblinguistics_innovation_and_variation_in_new_forms_of_written_CMC#=_.

This dissertation and blog made public by the student author, Grant examines the language and textspeak usage on one specific social media platform—Tumblr. Grant also expresses great desire to spark curiosity in further research into internet linguistics. Using specific posts as examples and data, Grant searches for the thing that both unifies and divides Tumblr's writing patterns. Much of her work uncovers how much extra effort is required to communicate within the norms of textspeak platforms. Much as Bogetić explains, choosing to use textspeak is just as complicated as choosing to write in formal English, it is simply in a different direction. One must search for the correct image response or emoji, and respond quickly enough to get their point across before the topic is changed. Grant was able to articulate and capture experiences I have had personally and present them in such a way that I was able to use them in the piece.

examining a specific site was also a thought I myself had, but did not have time to do, and so was grateful for a piece such as this.

Humphrys, John. "I H8 Txt Msgs: How Texting Is Wrecking Our Language." *Daily Mail*. September 24, 2007. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-483511/I-h8-txt-msgs-How-texting-wrecking-language.html>.

Though more than a bit exaggerated, Humphrys's discussion of textspeak's negative impacts serve as an important touch point. While he does not offer much in the name of research supporting his claim, his anecdotal support involving the Oxford English Dictionary, and his general musings and fears need to be addressed in order to properly look at the topic. He does make some sound arguments though, such as those that the recipient may not even be able to understand a message sent in textspeak, and so it's effectiveness at communicating anything, paralinguistic or not, is lost. Tradition has its merits, and that is partially why I sought to reconcile the two voices by the end of the piece. I don't necessarily think Humphrys is entirely wrong, I just don't believe he is responding to language change the right way.

Lafrance, Adrienne. "Teens Aren't Ruining Language." *The Atlantic*. January 27, 2016. <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2016/01/blatantly-budge-and-other-dead-slang/431433/>.

Lafrance traces the way language changes not just because of age and technology but because of place, class, and gender as well. She consults numerous studies in order to make her point. Her article also explains how language being used by an individual can be a marker of culture or place in society, and how that can be taken and appropriated. While not useful to my piece, that concept is ultimately important to consider in any discussion of textspeak and linguistics. She ends her piece with a reminder that all slang comes and goes, and all language changes all the time. To demonize it is not the way to influence it. I felt it was important to include as a reminder that there is a positive side to formal English. It does not change at the same pace that textspeak does.

McCulloch, Gretchen. "What's the Difference Between 'You' and 'U'?" *MentalFloss*. May 7, 2015. <http://mentalfloss.com/article/63598/whats-difference-between-you-and-u>.

Using mostly posts from Twitter as her examples and data, McCulloch, a linguist, attempts to nail down the split between the traditional "you" and the textspeak shortening "u". Both are featured in textspeak mediums. She decides that, first and foremost, this phenomenon is not primarily to save space in messages. She points out that the you/u may be an attempt to recapture the formal/informal forms of address found in other languages. She's also found that "u" is used far more often in association with emotive phrases. The conclusions she drew seemed to be mostly applicable to Twitter, and may not have been universal. However, the flexibility and variability of usage she represented were characteristic of all textspeak. There didn't seem to be one consistent usage across a wide variety of sources. She also has a whole series examining different textspeak topics and referencing her would allow a reader to access those same sources.

McNabb, Cameron Hunt. "The Truth about Internet Slang: It Goes Way Back." *Salon*. August 3 2014. the_truth_about_internet_slang_it_goes_way_back/.

McNabb's article addresses the simple fact that numerous textspeak abbreviations bear striking resemblance to the older abbreviations meant to save space in manuscripts. These shortenings, called "quill speak" served the same purpose as "lol" does in a Tweet, mainly adapting to pressures of the form. There are, in fact, more abbreviations in these ancient texts than in modern textspeak, because the pressures to abbreviate then were greater than now. His example of abbreviation in the Bible, a text most would consider sacred and above the "defilement" of textspeak is a cool reminder that, when necessary, language will adapt to whatever needs doing. I appreciated his span of the history of abbreviation. It tied in well with Crystal's point regarding the more modern forms of abbreviations that those who often decry textspeak are actually familiar with.

McWhorter, John. "Txtng Is Killing Language. JK!!!" Lecture. TED2013. February 2013. https://www.ted.com/talks/john_mcwhorter_txtng_is_killing_language_jk.

McWhorter's TedTalk covers the history of language, the span of language change, and explains why, from a linguist's perspective, textspeak does not spell the end of English. He presents the idea of formal and casual speech, which translates easily into formal and casual writing. The phrase he uses is "fingered speech" which ties nicely into the concept of textual paralinguistics as presented by the IdeaChannel. He also shows that textspeak itself has evolved beyond what it once was, and something like LOL which may have meant something literal once, no longer does. He sees the change that has arisen as a sort of linguistic miracle, and his reminder that people have always been griping on language changes is sobering. This is what languages and dialects do, after all. Having his expert opinion to support some of the ideas put forth by other sources I had found was essential. Having it presented through this short lecture made it easier to track, and again serves as an essential text, especially if paired with "Can You Speak Emoji".

McWhorter, John. "What's a Language, Anyway?" *The Atlantic*. January 19, 2016. <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/01/difference-between-language-dialect/424704/>.

McWhorter goes much more in depth from the base Ettlinger left us. McWhorter ensures we understand the politics behind language and the redundancies that often emerge in delineating languages. To English speakers, the lines seem clear, as Ettlinger explains. Languages are made up of dialects which are all mutually intelligible. But around the world that doesn't hold true, and McWhorter presents numerous examples of these cases. More than anything it is history and culture which determines what is language and what is dialect. As such, it is up to history and our culture to determine whether textspeak will be considered a dialect or a whole new language form. McWhorter's piece helped further explain what I had already learned from Ettlinger, while also reinforcing something I quickly learned during research. Language change is complicated, and the correct answer is often that there is none. Language doesn't exist so much on a spectrum as a sliding scale that varies from place to place, whether the place is physical or digital.

Tagliamonte, S. A., and D. Denis. "Linguistic Ruin? Lol! Instant Messaging And Teen Language." *American Speech* 83, no. 1 (2008): 3-34. doi:10.1215/00031283-2008-001.

Tagliamonte and Denis analyzed a collection of IM's from 72 teenagers to actively analyze if textspeak were affecting English skills. What they found is that IMs are still actively rooted in English. It has changed and continues to change in similar ways that formal written English has, while still remaining a new "miraculous" thing. The investigated IM's incorporated numerous forms and styles. The two also compared written and spoken language which can show where the two overlap and diverge, useful when one considers textspeak "fingered speech". Tagliamonte and Denis found that textspeak, at the time, lagged behind spoken communication in the usage of innovative forms. Considering the age of the research, and the speed with which technology has increased it is possible the two are at a more even level today. Still, looking at Tagliamonte's data says that, if anything, worrisome adults should be attacking the spoken forms of these words rather than textspeak.

Wolfram, Walt. "The Truth About Change." PBS.org 2005. <http://www.pbs.org/speak/ahead/change/change/>.

Part of a series of essays and works analyzing language across the US, Wolfram's essay tracks how spoken language shifts and travels across countries. The most important part of his essay is its core and that is that languages change. That is what they do and what they need to do to survive. He also puts forth the idea that it is not the media (or the internet) that drives most of these changes, but rather real people, particularly in the middle class in urban areas. Though his article was focused on the spoken rather than the written, the principle of textspeak and its slang seems to be much the same. The conventions begin in spoken forms in urban areas, spread through the internet and radiate slowly outward until it meets confrontation in the more conservative areas of the internet. Reading the piece served as a solid reminder of the parallels between the written and spoken and the reinforcement that the most significant thing about textspeak is its fluidity and its ability to change.